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Brahmins and Buddhists from a sociolinguistic point of view

1. (a) Major **publications** having **direct** relevance to the topic:

Deshpande, Madhav M. (a) 1979. *Sociolinguistic Attitudes in India: an Historical Reconstruction*. Ann Arbor: Karoma Publishers. (b) 1993. *Sanskrit & Prakrit: Sociolinguistic Issues*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. (c) 1995. *Saṁskṛta āṇi Prākṛta Bhāṣā: Vyavahāra, Niyamana, āṇi Śāstra-carcā*. Puṇe: Śubhadā Sārasvata Prakāśana. Marāṭhī. Also, everal articles by the same scholar.

Bechert, Heinz (ed.). 1980. *Die Sprache der altesten buddhistischen Uberlieferung (The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition)*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Mishra, K.N. (ed.). *Aspects of Buddhist Sanskrit*. Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1993.

Houben, Jan E.M. (ed.). 1996. *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit: Contributions to the History of the Sanskrit Language*. Ed. Leiden - New York - -Deokar Köln: E.J. Brill.

Bahulkar, S.S.; Deokar, M.A. 2012. "Ideology and language identity:a Buddhist perspective." In *Saṁskṛta-sādhutā*, pp. 37-53. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld.

(b) **Publications** with **indirect** bearing on the topic:

Caillat, Collette (ed.)1989. *Dialectes dans les Litteratures Indo-Aryennes*. Paris: College de France, Institut de Civilisation Indienne.

Erdosy, George (ed.). 1995. *The Indo-Aryans of Ancient South Asia : Language, Material Culture and Ethnicity*. Berlin/NY: de Gruyteer. Indian ed. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1997.

Some publications of Richard Salomon and Michael Witzel not included in the above.

2. Terms and term-groups that are relevant to the discussion:

Saṁskṛta/Sanskrit : Prākṛta/Prakrit,
Pāli, Māgadhī, Ardha-māgadhī
Chandas : bhāṣā
Vedic : Sanskrit
Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit,
Jaina Sanskrit,
vernacular Sanskrit

status : attitude

Brāhmaṇa 'priest, educator,'
Kṣatriya 'administrator, military person,'
Vaiśya 'cultivator, manufacturer, merchant,'
Śūdra 'servant, helper of other three classes'

Brahmanism : Śramaṇic religions
varṇa theory : varṇa practice

non-Āryas : Vedic, non-Vedic

Ārya : Aryan
Ārya : Dāsa, Dasyu, Mleccha, Barbara
Ārya : speakers of Indo-Aryan languages
Vedic Āryas : pre-Vedic Āryas

Āryāvarta. Aryana / airyana vaeja
Ārya : Śūdra
Ārya: Indo-European languages
Āryas : Vedic non-Āryas

3. Convenient segmentation: (a) pre-Veda and earliest Vedic periods, (b) the period between the composition of the late Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas, on the one hand, and the composition of Pāṇini's grammar, on the other, (c) post-vedic period nearer to the rise of Jainism and Buddhism, (d) post-Pāṇini period and (e) the first few centuries of the Christian era.

4. Ṛg-veda 8.100.11: *devīṁ vācam ajanayanta devās tāṁ viśva-rūpāḥ paśavo vadanti / sā no mandreṣam ūrjaṁ duhānā dhenur vāg asmān upa suṣṭutaitu* // "The divine ones gave birth to Speech, which is divine. All kinds of living creatures give expression to her. May that sweet-sounding milch-cow Speech, when properly praised, approach us, bestowing juicy nourishment (as she approaches us)."

5. Deshpande's equations 'non-Aryan = lower slotting in sociey' and 'non-Aryan language = substandard language.'

D 1979:7-11: "By the time of Kātyāyana (about 300 B.C.) and Patañjali (about 100 B.C.), ... even Brahmins have begun using Prakrits as their first languages, while Sanskrit is retained in the ritual and scholastic contexts. Kātyāyana concedes that one can indeed communicate in a Prakrit language as well as in Sanskrit, but he insists that only the use of Sanskrit leads to religious merit *(dharma)*. ... in terms of their social office and historical traditions, they [= the Brahmins] emotionally identified with the "preserved" Sanskrit language ... Another significant factor involved in this Brahmanical view is that Buddhism and Jainism were not only opposed to Vedic religion, but they were also opposed to the Sanskrit language in an attempt to undermine the authority of the Brahmins and to align themselves with the non-Brahmanical masses. ... Only on this hypothesis can we fully understand why Kātyāyana claims that only the use of Sanskrit leads to *Dharma*, while the "subnormal" languages lead to *Adharma*."[1]

A part of the preceding is confirmed by D 1993a:25: "From even a casual reading of the Mahābhāṣya, a fact clearly emerges, namely that there was a fierce competition between Sanskrit and Prakrit, and that in this competition the Prakrit had already surpassed Sanskrit as the language of the world (*loka*). Under these circumstances, the Sanskrit grammarians defended Sanskrit as the language of *dharma*, rather than as a language of worldly communication."

6. Manu 10.73: *anāryam ārya-karmāṇam āryaṁ cānārya-karmiṇam / saṁpradhāryābravid dhātā na samau nāsamāv iti* // "Having considered the case of a non-Aryan who acts like an Aryan, and that of an Aryan who acts like a non-Aryan, the creator declared, 'Those two are neither equal nor unequal."

Cf. Manu 7.211 (*āryatā* = something like *sādhutva* 'goodness, being a civilized person') and Manu 10.58 (*anāryatā* = something like *asādhutva* 'opposite of good ness')

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[1] In the part I have not quoted at this point, D asserts that the Brahmin evaluation of Prakrit languages was so negative that it led even to a negative evaluation (a) of the speakers of Prakrits, (b) of the scriptures written in Prakrits and (c) of the religions practiced by the speakers of Prakrits.

7. Manu 10.57: *varṇāpetam avijñātaṁ naraṁ kaluṣa-yonijam / ārya-rūpam ivānāryaṁ karmabhiḥ svair vibhāvayet* // . One should cause a man who is not an Ārya (but) has, as it were, the look of an Ārya to appear (in his true identity, that is, one should trace out a man of possible but doubtful membership in the Ārya community) through (one's own (testing) actions or his) own actions (or responses) — (a man) who is not associated with any varṇa, who is not specifically known (to oneself and) who is born of obscure parentage."

Other verses from Manu mistakenly considered decisive: 2.24 (Halbfass 1988:177, 509 note 23), 10.66-67, 10.73.

8. Paṇṇavaṇā-sutta lists of Āryas:

A. *ṛddhi-prāpta* 'exalted'

B. *aṇṛddhi-prāpta* 'unexalted, ' subdivided into:

1. region,
2. birth, *jātyārya* / *jāti-ariya* =
   Ambaṭṭha [= Ambaṣṭha, AA], Ambaṭṭha-sutta (Dīgha-nikāya 3) of the Pāli canon. Manu 10.8: *brāhmaṇād vaiśya-kanyāyām ambaṣṭho nāma jāyate* / "An Ambaṣṭha is a person born of a Brahmin father and a Vaiśya mother."
   Kalinda [= Kālinda, AA],
   Videha [= Vaideha, MMD],
   Vedaga,
   Hariya [= Hārita, AA],
   Cuṁcuṇa [= Cuṁcu, Michael Witzel]
3. clan, *kulārya* / *kulāriya* =
   Ugga [= Ugra, MMD] Manu 10.9: *kṣatriyācchūdra-kanyāyāṁ krūrācāra-vihāravān / kṣatra-śūdra-vapur jantur ugro nāma prajāyate* // " An Ugra is a person born of a Kṣatriya father and a Śūdra woman. His conduct and sports are/can be cruel. He has the physical appearance of both a Kṣatriya and a Śūdra."
   Bhoga [Bhoja, AA],
   Rā.iṇṇa [Rājanya, MMD],
   Ikkhāga [Ikṣvāku, MMD],
   Ṇāta [Jñāta, MMD],
   Koravva [Kauravya, MMD]
4. function
5. profession
6. language
7. wisdom
8. realization
9. conduct